PEBA is serious about preventing cyber attacks, and you should be, too.

The S.C. Public Employee Benefit Authority (PEBA) is committed to preventing cyber attacks of its information systems. We have multiple lines of defense in place to help ensure that your personal information is safe. We use a variety of hardware and software solutions, as well as vigilant monitoring of our systems, to mitigate security risks.

We don't leave it all up to the machines, though. Our employees are involved in the process as well. Each year, all of our employees attend mandatory security training, through which they are made aware of the various tactics being used to gain unauthorized access to our systems and are advised of the latest strategies to protect against these threats.

Here are some tips you can use to help prevent unauthorized access to the information stored on your personal electronic devices:

- Make sure your electronic devices are password-protected and lock after a short period of nonuse. This is especially important if you're using a laptop or tablet, which can easily be stolen.

- Do not access your insurance or retirement account information from an electronic device through unsecured wireless Internet access. Many cafés, restaurants, bookstores, etc., now offer wireless Internet access but are not on a secure server.

- Make sure anti-virus or anti-malware software is installed on your computer and other applicable devices and that the software is updated regularly.

- Only visit reputable websites; be wary of clicking on links in pop-up ads. When a pop-up ad appears, go to Task Manager (by pressing Ctrl, Alt and Delete if using Microsoft Windows) and close the pop-up by clicking End Task rather than by clicking X on the pop-up window. Mac users may activate a pop-up ad blocker option in Safari, the default web browser for the Mac OS X operating system.

- Be careful when downloading files from the Internet; run a virus scan on the files before opening or unzipping them.

- Never open a suspicious attachment or email.

- Limit the amount of personal information you store on your electronic devices.

- Be careful when browsing the Web or checking your email from any electronic device, including a smartphone.

- Enter sensitive information only on secure websites, which are those with a URL beginning with "https."

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